

Graduation speakers praise med students

BY SUZANNE BRABECK
The Battalion

Sixty-three students in the College of Medicine took their final steps toward their medical degree as they walked across the stage of Reed Arena last Saturday at the college's 19th commencement exercises.

Spencer Travis Sinclear, Class of '99, said, "There's nothing like the fear of paying off an \$80,000 loan without a degree as motivation for making it through medical school."

Among the graduates of the college was Kip Corrington, a former A&M football star who played for the Denver Broncos.

Corrington delivered the "moment of reflection" for the Class of '99.

Corrington, who maintained a 3.5 grade point average throughout medical school, received his fourth degree from A&M at the ceremony.

Speakers at the commencement exercise said they believed the class should strive to be technically proficient, morally responsible and involved in the community.

Michael L. Friedland, dean of the College of Medicine, said students interacted well with each other during their time in medical school.

"This is also a wonderful program because the students frequently helped each other whether it was academically or personally, and the faculty were very involved with their students," he said.

Luci Baines Johnson, commencement speaker for the ceremony, chair of the board of the LBJ Holding Company, vice president of business suites and a member of the board of directors of LBJ Broad-



ANTHONY DISLAVO/THE BATTALION

Luci Baines Johnson, commencement speaker, receives a medal of honor at the graduation ceremonies Saturday at Rudder Auditorium.

casting said, "You are extremely bright, boundlessly energetic and exhaustively hard-working."

"Although these special gifts are necessary, they are not sufficient. You need passion for your work, for your patients, for the communities in which you serve and passion for life pursuits beyond medicine."

Michael Dean McFadden was presented with The Helen Salyer Anderson Award, the award for the student with the highest grade point ratio during his or her four years of medical school and received a check for \$1,500. McFadden also received a medallion and a plaque in recognition of his accomplishments.

VISION

Continued from Page 1

chance of becoming one of the top-five universities in the nation, and I think we can do it before 2020."

Walter V. Wendler, Vision 2020 coordinator, said another important factor in the success of this program will be the faculty.

"The one most important issue that will propel us into the top-10 ranked universities will be the increasing size and quality of the faculty," he said.

"They are the core of the institution."

Wendler said this type of long-range planning is nothing new to A&M. In the '60s President James Earl Rudder developed "The Aspirations Study," which made the Corps of Cadets non-compulsory and officially accepted women into the University for the first time.

"Texas A&M has a history of long-range planning," Wendler said. "And has always been successful in achieving its objectives and goals. Not every university can say that."

Bush leads Quayle, Dole in Ohio poll

CINCINNATI (AP) — Texas Gov. George Bush's support for the 2000 presidential primary widened over Elizabeth Dole's among Republicans and independents, according to an Ohio Poll released Sunday.



BUSH

Thirty-nine percent of those surveyed said they would be most likely to support Bush, and 20 percent chose Dole. Ten percent chose U.S. Rep. John Kasich, R-Ohio.

They were followed by Dan Quayle (9 percent); John McCain and Pat Buchanan (5 percent); Steve Forbes and Gary Bauer (3

percent); and Lamar Alexander (1 percent).

Five percent said they did not know and another 1 percent chose "other." The numbers did not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

In an Ohio Poll taken in February, 36 percent picked Bush and 25 percent chose Dole. Fifteen percent picked Quayle and the other candidates were in single digits.

The poll, sponsored by the University of Cincinnati, was conducted by the university's Institute for Policy Research from May 11 through May 23.

A total of 343 Republican and independent registered voters from throughout the state were interviewed by telephone.

The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 5 points.

Report attacks Texas air quality

WASHINGTON (AP) — The air that Texans inhale is not as clean as it could be because regulators are not enforcing federal clean air statutes as vigorously as they should, an environmental research group charges.

"Major improvements in air quality in Texas could be achieved just by strict enforcement of current laws and regulations," the Environmental Working Group concluded. "To achieve this goal however, both state and federal environmental enforcement agencies need to vastly improve their enforcement activities."

The organization's assessment, in a recent report entitled "Above the Law: How the Government Lets Major Air Polluters Off the Hook," was disputed by Texas officials, who say their enforcement is robust.

But the report's authors, who ex-

amined Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) records on Clean Air Act enforcement nationwide for 1997 and 1998, concluded that a "shocking percentage" of large industrial polluters "keep operating in open, government-certified violation of the law — month after month, year after year — without paying a penny in fines."

The state's environmental agency, the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC), levied \$5.7 million in Clean Air Act fines during the two-year period, an amount Environmental Working Group describes as inadequate in deterring future violations.

"In contrast to the image of a crushing regulatory burden, this analysis clearly shows that there is barely any enforcement at all of existing clean air health protections

and virtually no pressure for polluters to comply with current air quality control laws," the study says.

An author of the report, blame largely on the TNRCC.

"We mainly fault the state because the state has the jurisdiction to enforce the Clean Air Act," John Coequyt said in a view. "EPA has also done a lot of overseeing the states' enforcement of the Clean Air Act."

A TNRCC official disputed findings and said fines cover only one facet of enforcement.

"You can't simply look at enforcement activity ... by talking how much money the agency spends on certain companies," spokeswoman Patrick Crum said. "Our agency has a very late, well-thought-out enforcement policy and penalty policy."

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